self-sufficiency in urea production, new plants based on FOILSHS/ LNG may also be permitted and provided with feedstock differential cost.

D. Fourth Phase: From 1.4.2006

The fourth phase begins on 1.4.2006 when the industry is decontrolled.

2. 7% Annual increase in MRP

The Commission recommended a 7% increase in the price of urea in real terms every year from 1.4.2001. This way the open market price will reach Rs. 6903 by 1.4.2006, a" level at which the industry can be freed from all controls and be required to compete with imports, with variable levy ensuring availability of such imports at the farm gate at Rs. 7000 per tonne of urea. While no concessions will be necessary from this date onwards for gas based, FOILSHS and mixed feed stock plants, existing naphtha units converting to LNG as also new plants and substantial additions to the existing plants will be entitled to a feed stock differential with that for LNG serving as a ceiling.

3. Dual Pricing Scheme and Employment Guarantee Scheme

For protecting the small and marginal farmers against the price rise of urea, the Commission has suggested introduction of dual price scheme through tradable coupons and expansion of Employment Guarantee Scheme and rural works programmes to increase their purchasing power.

Closing down of NPPA

938. SHRI MUNAVVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that NPPA (National Pharmaceutical Pricing Authority) has no role to play in the light of patent law;

(b) whether it is also a fact that the Chairman and Member (Secretary) of NPPA have been transferred;

(c) whether it is also a fact that no officer is interested to join NPPA; and

(d) if so, whether Government would consider to close down NPPA?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise in view of reply above.

Decline in land fertility due to fertilizers

† 939. SHRI JANESHWAR MISHRA: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that fertility of land throughout the country is continuously decreasing, due to use of chemicals fertilizers by farmers, for their crops;

(b) if so, whether Government would impart training to farmers for using useful chemical fertilizers, after undertaking and extensive test of agricultural land in the country;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that farmers in India get fertilizers on lowest subsidy in comparison to their counterparts in other countries of the world?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SATYA BRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (c) Application of fertilizers is recommended on the basis of existing nutrients of the soil and requirement of crops. However, there are certain instances of declining in soil health and productivity due to inadequate andfor imbalanced use of fertilizers in certain parts of the country. Government has taken the following steps to encourage the balanced use of fertilizers and sustenance of soil fertility:

(i) The soil-testing programme is periodically strengthened to make the fertilizer use recommendations according to the nutrient status of the soils.

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† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.